

## APPENDIX A

# CONTINUOUS OPERATIONS

*The SBCT often operates for extended periods of time in continuous operations. Continuous operations are combat operations that continue at the same high intensity level for extended periods. During continuous operations, leaders and soldiers must think faster, make decisions more rapidly, and act more quickly than the enemy. Leaders must know the commander's intent. They must be able to act spontaneously and synchronously, even though the situation has changed and communications are disrupted. This continuous cycle of day and night operations and the associated stress of combat cause degradation in performance over time. Reducing this impact on performance is a significant challenge for the C2 system.*

### **A-1. EFFECTS OF CONTINUOUS OPERATIONS**

Continuous operations force leaders and soldiers to perform under adverse conditions that cause degradation in performance and may lead to combat stress. Table A-1, page A-2, depicts combat stress behaviors.

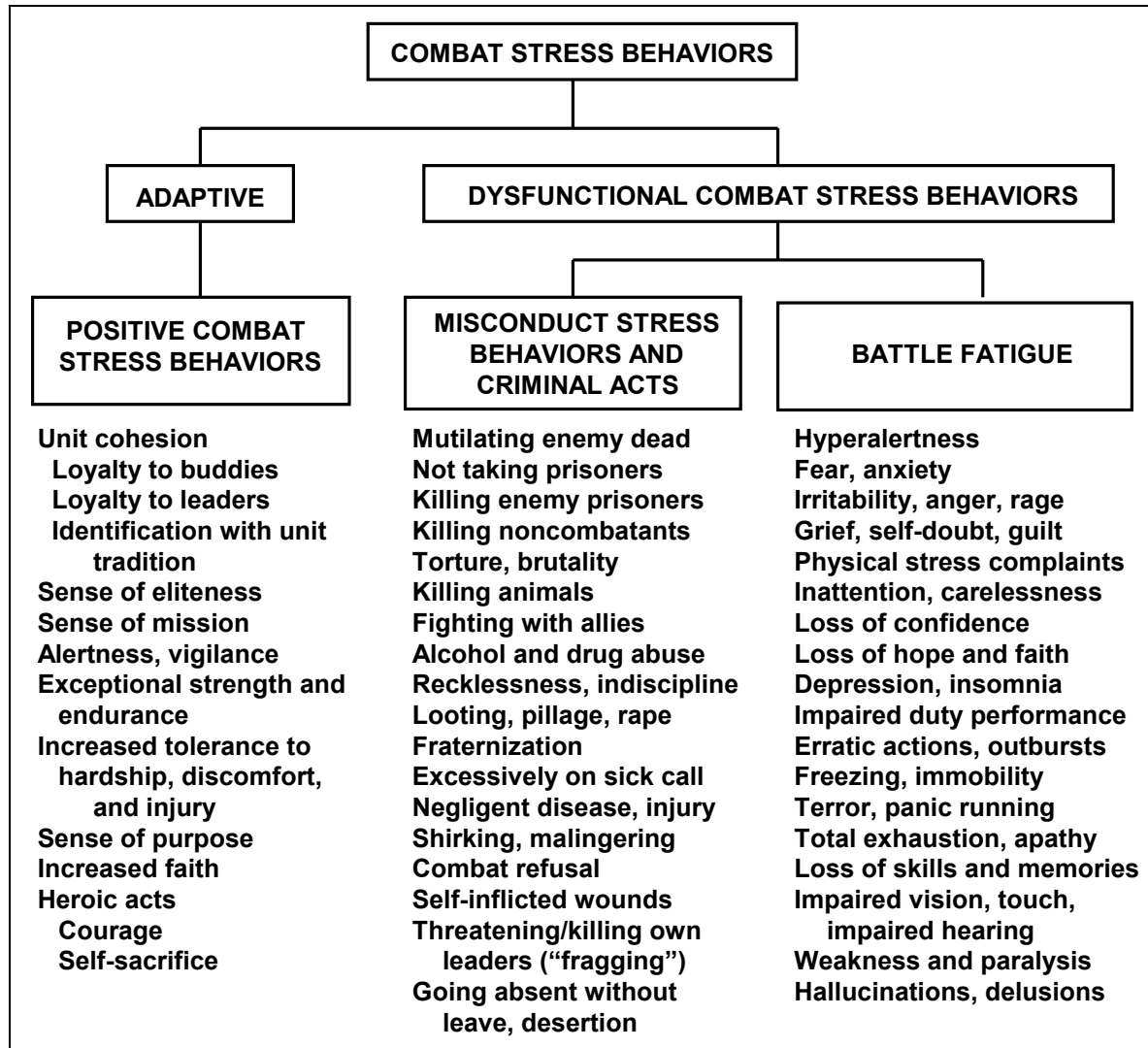


Table A-1. Combat stress behaviors.

## A-2. COMBAT STRESS CONTROL

Controlling combat stress is often the deciding factor--the difference between victory and defeat--in all forms of human conflict. Stressors are a fact of combat and soldiers must face them. It is controlled combat stress (when properly focused by training, unit cohesion, and leadership) that gives soldiers the necessary alertness, strength, and endurance to accomplish their mission.

a. Controlled combat stress can call forth stress reactions of loyalty, selflessness, and heroism. Conversely, uncontrolled combat stress causes erratic or harmful behavior that disrupts or interferes with accomplishment of the unit mission. Uncontrolled combat stress could impair mission performance and may bring disgrace, disaster, and defeat.

b. The art of war aims to impose so much stress on the enemy soldiers that they lose their will to fight. Both sides try to do this and at times accept severe stress themselves in order to inflict greater stress on the enemy. To win, combat stress must be controlled.

### A-3. RESPONSIBILITIES FOR CONTROLLING COMBAT STRESS

Responsibility for combat stress control requires a continuous interaction that begins with each soldier and his buddies. Combat stress control also includes unit combat lifesavers and medics. The interaction continues through the small unit leaders and extends up through the organizational leaders, both officers and NCOs, at all echelons.

a. **Unit Cohesiveness Development.** Rigorous, realistic training for war must go on continuously to assure unit readiness. Emphasis must be placed on establishing and maintaining cohesive units. Unit training and activities must emphasize development of soldier skills. This development should focus on building trust and establishing effective communication throughout the unit.

b. **Senior (Organizational) Leaders' Responsibilities.** The chain of command must ensure that the standards for military leadership are met. Senior leaders must provide the necessary information and resources to the junior leaders to control combat stress and to make stress work for the US Army and against the enemy. The following are some suggestions for combat stress control for consideration by senior leadership:

- Be competent, committed, courageous, candid, and caring.
- Plan to accomplish the mission with as few losses as possible.
- Set the policy and command climate for stress control, especially to build teams with high cohesion.
- Serve as an ethical role model.
- Make "The Bureaucracy" work for the soldiers.
- Assure resources to "take care of the soldiers."
- Plan for and conduct tough, realistic training to include live fire.
- Provide as much information as possible to the soldiers.
- Assure that medical and mental health/combat stress control personnel are assigned and trained with their supported units.
- Plan for combat stress control in all operations.
- Provide junior leaders/NCOs with necessary guidance.
- Ensure risk assessments are conducted prior to all training and combat operations.
- Supervise the junior leaders/NCOs and reward their success.
- Be visible.
- Lead all stress control by good example.
- Maintain (through positive leadership and, when necessary, with disciplinary action) the high standards of the international law of land warfare.

c. **Junior (Direct) Leaders' Responsibilities.** Junior leaders, and especially the NCOs, have the crucial task of applying the principles of stress control day-by-day, hour-by-hour, minute-by-minute. These responsibilities overlap with senior leaders' responsibilities but include parts that are fundamentally "sergeants' business," supported by the officers. The following are junior leadership considerations for combat stress control:

- Be competent, committed, courageous, candid, and caring.
- Build cohesive teams; integrate new personnel quickly.
- Cross-train soldiers wherever and whenever possible.

- Plan and conduct tough realistic training that replicates combat conditions.
- Take care of soldiers (including leaders).
- Assure physical fitness, nutrition, hydration, adequate clothing and shelter, and preventive medicine measures.
- Make and enforce sleep plans.
- Keep accurate information flow down to the lowest level and back up again; dispel rumors.
- Encourage sharing of resources and feelings.
- Conduct after-action debriefings routinely.
- Maintain (through positive leadership and, when necessary, with disciplinary action) the high standards of the international law of land warfare.
- Recommend exemplary soldiers for awards and decorations.
- Recognize excess stress early and give immediate support.
- Keep those stressed soldiers who can still perform their duties in the unit, and provide extra support and encourage them back to full effectiveness.
- Send those stressed soldiers who cannot get needed rest in their small unit back to a supporting element for brief sleep, food, hygiene, and limited duty, to return in 1 to 2 days.
- Refer temporarily unmanageable stress cases through channels for medical evacuation and treatment.
- Welcome recovered battle fatigue casualties back and give them meaningful work and responsibilities.

#### **A-4. LOSS OF SLEEP DEGRADATION**

One of the most significant factors leading to soldier degradation is the loss of sleep. Table A-2 shows the effects of sleep loss. Other contributing factors include low light levels, limited visibility, disrupted sleep routines, physical fatigue, and stress.

<b>AFTER 24 HOURS</b>	A deterioration in performance of tasks that are inadequately or newly learned, that are monotonous, or that require vigilance.
<b>AFTER 36 HOURS</b>	A marked deterioration in ability to register and understand information.
<b>AFTER 72 HOURS</b>	Performance on most tasks will be about 50 percent of normal.
<b>3 TO 4 DAYS</b>	This is the limit for intensive work including mental and physical elements. Visual illusions are likely at this stage, or earlier, especially in NBC.
<b>BETWEEN 0300 &amp; 0600 HOURS</b>	Performance is at its lowest ebb.

**Table A- 2. Effects of sleep loss.**

**A-5. INDICATORS OF SLEEP DEPRIVATION AND FATIGUE**

To minimize the effects of sleep loss, all commanders must be able to recognize the signs of sleep loss and fatigue. Table A-3 shows the indicators of sleep deprivation and fatigue.

<b>PHYSICAL CHANGES</b>	Body swaying when standing. Vacant stares. Pale skin. Slurred speech. Bloodshot eyes.
<b>MOOD CHANGES</b>	Less energetic, alert, and cheerful. Loss of interest in surroundings. Possible depressed mood or apathetic and more irritable.
<b>EARLY MORNING DOLDRUMS</b>	Requires more effort to do a task in the morning than in the afternoon, especially between 0300 and 0600.
<b>COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS</b>	Unable to carry on a conversation. Forgetfulness. Difficulty in speaking clearly.
<b>DIFFICULTY IN PROCESSING INFORMATION</b>	Slow comprehension and perception. Difficulty in accessing simple situations. Requiring longer to understand information.
<b>IMPAIRED ATTENTION SPAN</b>	Decreased vigilance. Failure to complete routines. Reduced attention span. Short-term memory loss. Inability to concentrate.

**Table A-3. Indicators of sleep deprivation and fatigue.**

**A-6. REDUCING THE IMPACT OF CONTINUOUS OPERATIONS**

Table A-4 shows the measures that may reduce the negative impacts of continuous operations.

<b>SLEEP SCHEDULING</b>		<b>COUNTERMEASURES</b>
<b>ADEQUATE</b>	4 hours of continuous sleep in every 24 hours (likely to maintain adequate performance over several weeks).	Give simple, precise orders. Increase use of written orders. Crosscheck. Plan more time for completion of all tasks. Enforce adequate food and water intake. Develop and enforce sleep plans. Good physical fitness slows the effects of sleep loss and fatigue. Increase use of confirmation briefs.
<b>SLEEP WAKEFULNESS</b>	A small amount of sleep relative to that lost is beneficial.	
<b>RECOVERY</b>	10 hours uninterrupted sleep required for full recovery after 48-72 hours without sleep.	
<b>CATNAPS (10 TO 30 MINUTES)</b>	Catnaps are beneficial, but the only truly effective remedy is sleep.	
<b>TIMING</b>	Consistent timing of sleep and wakeup times will contribute to successful adjustment to an arduous regimen.	
<b>NOTE:</b> After 48-72 hours without sleep, soldiers become militarily ineffective. After 5 to 7 days of partial sleep deprivation, alertness and performance decline to the same low level as seen following 2 to 3 days without sleep.		

**Table A-4. Reducing the impact of continuous operations.**

**A-7. SLEEP DENIAL**

Commanders and leaders often regard themselves as being the least vulnerable to fatigue and the effects of sleep loss. Tasks requiring quick reaction, complex reasoning, and detailed planning, however, make leaders the most vulnerable to the effects of sleep deprivation. Leaders must sleep. The display of sleep denial as an example of self-control by leaders is extremely counterproductive.